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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions in relation to the sixth periodic report of Tajikistan

Addendum

Replies of Tajikistan*

[Date received: 19 June 2018]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

Please recycle

Constitutional and legislative framework

Paragraph 1

1. The legislation of Tajikistan completely prohibits any form of discrimination, including discrimination against women. The Criminal Code provides for liability for discrimination.

2. On 14 March 2018, in order to consolidate a comprehensive legal definition of discrimination, an interdepartmental working group was set up to consider the question of formulating a separate law against discrimination and strengthening the legislation in this regard.

Paragraph 2

3. In Tajikistan, men and women enjoy the full range of socioeconomic, political and personal rights and freedoms. The Republic of Tajikistan condemns all forms of discrimination against women and is pursuing a policy of eliminating discrimination against women.

4. The Constitution and other laws of Tajikistan do not include provisions that directly or indirectly restrict women's rights and freedoms. The Constitution establishes State guarantees of equality of human and civil rights and freedoms regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, language, origin, property or official status, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs, membership of public associations or other circumstances.

5. The law on State guarantees of equal rights for men and women and equal opportunities in the exercise of such rights, of 1 March 2005, defines discrimination as any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of gender which is designed to weaken or nullify recognition of the equal rights of men and women in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other sphere; it also seeks to prevent gender-based discrimination and establish State guarantees of equal opportunities for persons of both genders. The law prohibits discrimination between men and women. Violation of the principle underlying gender equality (carrying out public policy or other acts that treat men and women unequally on the basis of gender) is considered discriminatory and has to be eliminated.

6. The law on the prevention of domestic violence governs social relations relevant to prevention of such violence, and defines the role of the entities involved in detecting, preventing and eliminating the causes and conditions that contribute to domestic violence.

7. By a Government decision of 3 May 2014, the State programme for the prevention of domestic violence in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2014–2023 was approved, under which the Committee for Women and the Family is the coordinator for implementation.

The programme is designed to strengthen the mechanisms for the prevention of domestic violence, control of crime, especially domestic violence, register individual warnings regarding the inadmissibility of antisocial acts, and of indecent and immoral behaviour in the family, and ensure the social and legal protection of the public on the basis of the laws and regulations aimed at preventing domestic violence.

8. Furthermore, in order to implement an effective policy on gender equality in Tajikistan, a number of subsidiary regulations have been adopted. In particular the State programme for the education, selection and placement of gifted women and girls in leadership positions in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2017–2022 was adopted on 1 April 2017.

9. With regard to the provision of data on the number of complaints received and investigated and on prosecutions and convictions under article 143 of the Criminal Code (violation of equal rights), it may be noted that according to the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, not a single offence was registered under this article between 2015 and 2017.

National machinery for the advancement of women

Paragraph 3

10. The Government has undertaken structural and financial measures to strengthen the capacity of the main institutional mechanism for the advancement of women and to coordinate the implementation of the gender policy, and has increased the staffing and funding of the Committee for Women and the Family. Since 1 November 2014, there has been an increase of 7 posts in the central apparatus and 105 in the local subdivisions. The Committee's budget is increasing every year: 750,991 somoni in 2013, 823,300 somoni in 2014, 892,910 somoni in 2015, 939,355 somoni in 2016, 996,110 somoni in 2017, and 1,012,110 somoni in 2018, which is 35 per cent more than in 2013. The number of full-time staff of divisions, departments and sections engaged in work involving women and the family in the regions, towns and districts of Tajikistan is from 3 to 7 people (nationwide, 247 people), and their work is funded from local budgets. District information and counselling centres, the staff of which number over 200 people nationwide, operate within the departments and sections. In the *Charogi Khidoyat* State training centre for orphan girls there are 31 staff. The training centre's budget for 2017 was 1,336,355 somoni, and for 2018, it is 1,611,729 somoni.

11. Over the past 10 years, under the State programme for the education, selection and placement of gifted women and girls in leadership positions in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2007–2017, 706,000 somoni was allocated from the State budget, and 78,000 [708,000] somoni is envisaged for the programme in the 2018 budget.

12. With a view to implementing the Government decision of 2 April 2011 on the establishment and award of Presidential grants to support and develop women's entrepreneurial activities for the period 2011–2015, 40 grants have been made every year, for a total of 1 million somoni. As of 2013, in accordance with a Government decision of 5 December 2013, the number of grants was increased from 40 to 80 and the amount allocated was 2 million somoni; in accordance with a Government decision of 2 November 2015, 2 million somoni is being allocated for women entrepreneurs up to the year 2020. Between 2006 and 2017, the amount allocated was 14,300,000 somoni.

13. Under a Government decision of 1 January 2015, a legal division and an expert council on gender analysis of legislation were established within the Committee for Women and the Family. The objective of the council's work is to carry out a gender analysis of draft laws before they are submitted to the Government and Parliament.

In 2017, a provision on the procedure for gender analysis of laws and regulations and the formulation of findings was adopted.

All laws and regulations received by the Committee for Women and the Family are reviewed by the expert council. During the period 2017–2018, 11 draft Government decisions and 9 draft laws were analysed.

14. The Committee for Women and the Family carries out internal monitoring of the implementation of laws, subsidiary regulations and State programmes, and the findings are subsequently considered by the board of the Committee, along with invited entities involved. During the period from 2017 to June 2018, the Committee

reviewed the implementation of, among others, the following State programmes and strategies: the national strategy on promoting the role of women in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2011–2020, the State programme for the prevention of domestic violence in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2014–2023, the Government decision of 2 November 2015 on the establishment and award of Presidential grants to support and develop women's entrepreneurial activities for the period 2016–2020.

15. Jointly with development partners, monitoring of the implementation of the law on State guarantees of equal rights for men and women and equal opportunities in the exercise of such rights (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), the law on the prevention of domestic violence (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)) and the State programme for the prevention of domestic violence in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2014–2023 (Prevention of Domestic Violence (PDV) project) is planned for 2018–2019.

Paragraph 4

16. The issue of increasing the number of female civil servants is reviewed annually at meetings of the board of the civil service agency, and the appropriate decisions are taken. In particular, the board's decisions of 6 March 2017 and 6 April 2018 were referred to State bodies to take the necessary measures in this regard. As a result of the adoption of a set of measures envisaged under various strategies, programmes and plans of action, the number of women in the civil service is steadily increasing.

17. Amendments and additions have been made to the regulation on the system for holding competitions to fill vacant administrative posts in the civil service in order to include privileges for women, specifically, on the basis of the results of the interview and upon their initial appointment to the civil service they are given three additional points.

18. A working group on strengthening laws and regulations in order to eliminate gender stereotypes, protect women's rights and prevent domestic violence has been established in the executive office of the President.

19. With a view to eradicating stereotypes concerning the roles of women and men in the family and society and in order to raise awareness of the need to ensure equal rights and opportunities for men and women and eliminate gender stereotypes, measures are being taken targeting various segments of society, making broad use of the information media. In order to increase understanding of the importance of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, the staff of the Committee for Women and the Family alone have produced more than 200 programmes, which have been broadcast on various national and local television channels. In cooperation with the PDV project, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN-Women, Oxfam, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation and the Taekwondo Association in Tajikistan, public service videos have been produced and broadcast on the following issues: equal rights of men and women in society; respect for women in the family; observance of the rights of women and children in the family; prevention of domestic violence through public discussion of family values; gender equality; the primordial importance of education for boys and girls; zero tolerance towards different forms of domestic violence; prevention of early marriage; and compulsory State registration of marriages. In 2018 the Committee for Women and the Family held 70 (seventy) meetings in ministries and departments of Tajikistan to raise awareness among male and female civil servants of the need to eliminate social stereotypes against women.

20. In 2018, in accordance with the work plan of the Government commission on the rights of the child, the Committee for Women and the Family set up a working group to consider the issue of establishing a facility for juvenile victims of violence.

21. In order to implement the State programmes, strategies and frameworks on gender equality, funds are sought from local budgets, and also from development partners.

A project on expanding the rights and opportunities of families left behind by migrant workers in Tajikistan has been implemented, with financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway. The project aimed to support the realization of the economic, social and legal rights and opportunities of families left behind by migrant workers. Support was provided to 30 economic initiatives for income-generating activities, involving more than 2,500 abandoned wives of migrants.

In 2015, together with the Asian Development Bank, under the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme, the G0245 project was implemented, supporting 82 projects for 137 women from the Rudaki, Hisor and Shakhrinav districts and the city of Tursunoda, located on the main road from Dushanbe to the border of Uzbekistan. Priority was accorded to projects developed by unemployed women from low-income families, migrant families, and families with daughters.

In line with a decision of the grant allocation bodies, 20 per cent of the total amount allocated is earmarked for support to vulnerable groups of women.

In order to attract more girls from remote districts of Tajikistan to study and qualify for an occupation, there is a Presidential quota every year for girls entering higher education institutions.

The mayor of the city of Dushanbe awards 200 scholarships for gifted girls studying in schools, high schools and higher education institutions.

Under the State programme for the education, selection and placement of gifted women and girls in leadership positions in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2017–2022, every year some 20 scholarships are provided for students in higher education institutions.

Temporary special measures

Paragraph 5

22. A short-term State programme to promote employment is being adopted for a fixed number of years and is helping to resolve issues relating to the labour market and employment, including women's employment, in Tajikistan.

In 2017, under the State programme to promote employment in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2016–2107, the following activities were carried out:

- Job placement — a total of 49,207 people, including 23,946 women;
- Assistance to women in finding permanent positions in existing job vacancies — 1,673 people;
- Support to women's initiatives for the development of entrepreneurship and self-employment — 1,840 people;
- Occupational training, refresher training and retraining in line with demand in the labour market — 12,734 people;
- Placement of women in paid public work — 2,083 people;
- Social support for women through the allocation and payment of unemployment benefits — 278 people;
- Provision of career guidance — 2,954 people.

The regular programme for the period 2018–2019, approved by a Government decision of 26 October 2017, provides for such activities. During 2018 and 2019, under this programme, a total of 79,000 women will be placed in various types of employment.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

Paragraphs 6–8

23. In 2015, a conceptual framework for family development in Tajikistan was adopted; it defines future State policy in strengthening the family as a key social institution and the foundation of society, protecting the interests of family members and improving that protection in line with modern concepts of the family as a social institution and a place for the education of children; providing the economic and social support necessary for strengthening the family; enhancing family education and development; and ensuring strict implementation of the constitutional principle of the equal rights of men and women in family relations.

24. In May 2018, in the palace of culture of the city of Levakant in the Khatlon region, an opening ceremony was held for a consultation room for work with rapists in implementation of the State programme for the prevention of domestic violence for the period 2014–2023. The consultation room was established with the support of the PDV project. In the consultation room, free legal and psychological assistance is provided.

25. The registry offices offer free advice to young couples before marriage on the protection of rights, equal rights of men and women and the elimination of gender stereotypes.

26. An important indicator of effective gender policy is the level of women's access to economic and financial resources. Gender equality issues have been incorporated as a cross-cutting theme in the poverty reduction strategy and national development policy of Tajikistan, as well as the principles of the equal rights of men and women in questions of access to land at the level of legislation and policy.

27. Under its gender policy, the Government encourages women's activism in the public sphere. In support of women's entrepreneurial activities, certain amounts are allocated by local authorities. The local executive authority of the Sogdh region allocated 1,105,000 somoni in 2013–2018; the city of Khujand — 220,000 somoni in 2014–2018; the Khatlon region — 500,000 somoni in 2016–2017; the Yavan district-160,000 somoni, the Muminabad district — 156,000 somoni and the Baldjuban district — 20,000 somoni for the development of women's entrepreneurial activities.

Please refer to the replies under paragraph 5.

28. In order to change stereotypes and attitudes, particularly among young people and to prepare boys and young men for family life and responsibilities, as well as to train girls and women for public life, in 2016 the Ministry of Education and Science introduced in Tajikistan's secondary schools the subjects "Family culture" (34 hours for students in grade 10) and "Foundations of communication and life skills" (34 hours for students in grade 8).

29. In 2010, amendments were made to the Family Code, whereby the minimum marriageable age was set at 18 years, which may be lowered by one year in exceptional circumstances by a decision of the courts. It should be noted that the Criminal Code provides for liability for giving in marriage girls who are under the marriageable age (art. 168) and for marrying a person who is under the marriageable age (art. 169)

30. In addition, in order to ensure the protection of the rights of children and their mothers, regardless of whether the spouses were married in an official or a religious *nikokh* ceremony, in the event of dissolution of the marriage, the court recognizes the woman as a family member and property owner and enables her to live in the family home (apartment) together with minor children, who are also entitled to live in the family home. There is also provision for establishing paternity and requiring the payment of alimony.

31. With a view to eliminating early marriage and polygamy, extensive outreach is carried out at the local level among the population, including young people and women. Handouts, including brochures and booklets, are printed, and television features have been produced, on this topic.

32. Under article 170 of the Criminal Code (bigamy and polygamy), the courts of Tajikistan convicted 86 people in 2014, 101 people in 2016, and 96 people in 2017.

33. As of 1 April 2018, the total staffing table for civil servants consists of 21,122 posts, of which 1,870 are vacant and 19,252 are encumbered. The number of female staff is 4,456, or 23.1 per cent.

A total of 5,782 people, or 30 per cent of the total number of civil servants, hold managerial positions; of that total, 1,100 people, or 19 per cent, are women.

Of those women: one is a member of the Government, one is the head of the Executive Office of the President, three are heads of State central bodies, seven are chairpersons of towns and districts, 23 are deputy heads of State central bodies, 64 are deputy chairpersons of towns and districts, 88 are heads of directorates, 127 are deputy heads of directorates, 477 are heads of department and 309 are directors of sectors.

The number of women in the civil service compared to the same period in 2017 increased by 280, or 1.1 per cent, compared with 2015 by 230, or 0.8 per cent, and compared with 2016, by 285, or 1.1 per cent.

On 1 April 2018, out of 612 candidates recommended to fill various civil service posts, 127 people, or 20.7 per cent, were women.

In order to attract more women to the civil service, privileges are granted on the basis of the results of the interview and upon the initial appointment of women to the civil service they are given three additional points. On the basis of this provision in 2017, 81 women and, as of 1 April 2018, 19 women were selected for various posts in the civil service.

In 2016, in order to implement programmes, laws and regulations in the sphere of gender equality in an organized manner and attract women to the civil service, the civil service agency, together with the institute of public administration, organized 35 refresher training courses for civil servants, 18 extramural courses and one internship. A total of 1,330 people attended, as well as 276 people who took part in separate projects, making a total of 1,606 civil servants who participated in courses, of whom 535, or 33.3 per cent, were women. In 2017, 43 courses were held, attended by 1,726 people, of whom 356, or 20.6 per cent, were women.

Gender-based violence against women

Paragraph 9

34. The Criminal Code establishes liability for a number of offences involving domestic violence. The question of the criminalization of domestic violence as a separate offence is currently under review.

35. With a view to effectively implementing the provisions of the legislation on the prevention of domestic violence, as well as providing assistance and support to women victims of violence, preventing and combating domestic violence, and protecting the rights, freedoms and constitutional guarantees of women in family and domestic relations, 33 crisis centres and 3 shelters have been established in Tajikistan and are in operation. In maternity wards of hospitals in a number of towns and districts, clinics for counselling and medical assistance to victims of domestic violence have been established and are in operation; they are mainly visited by women and minor children. Under a joint project with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office, 12 clinics for the prevention of domestic violence (which have already been visited by more than 2,500 victims of domestic violence) have been established; on 17 March 2010, the post of domestic violence inspector was established in the internal affairs bodies, and on 20 April 2015, guidelines were approved on the work of the staff of the internal affairs bodies in preventing domestic violence (24 April 2015).

36. In order to raise the legal awareness of citizens and prevent abusive acts, including domestic violence, 110 information and counselling centres have been set up with the support of social partners in departments and sections for women and family affairs of executive bodies in regions, towns and districts of Tajikistan in which lawyers and psychologists provide practical assistance to the public; these centres operate in divisions, departments and sections which work with women and families and are funded from the budgets of local executive bodies.

37. Over the past 10 years, under the State programme for the education, selection and placement of gifted women and girls in leadership positions in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2007–2017, 706,000 somoni was allocated from the State budget, and 78,000 [708,000] somoni is envisaged for the programme in the 2018 budget.

38. Currently, in conjunction with international financial institutions, 63 investment projects are being implemented for a total of US$ 2.6 billion; in the course of their implementation, gender equality is strictly ensured.

39. Under the State programme to promote employment in the Republic of Tajikistan, in order to support unemployed persons and promote self-employment by means of the creation of additional jobs through the provision of small concessional loans, more than 14.6 million somoni has been allocated from the State budget up to 2018.

40. In order to promote women's entrepreneurship, create new jobs, increase women's participation in the economic sector, ensure their competitiveness in the labour market and facilitate the employment of women and girls, on the basis of a Government decision on the establishment and award of Presidential grants to support and develop women's entrepreneurial activities for the period 2016–2020, 2 million somoni was allocated from the State budget in 2017, and 2 million somoni is envisaged for this purpose in the 2018 State budget.

41. In order to develop market relations on the basis of support for entrepreneurship and the development of competitiveness by attracting and making effective use of substantive programmes, projects and activities in the small and medium-sized

business sector, the Government has established a business support fund, a State entity. In order to replenish the fixed capital in the fund, 203 million somoni was allocated from the State budget in 2013–2017, and 70 million somoni is envisaged for this purpose in the 2018 budget.

42. These funds from the State budget contribute to efforts to combat human trafficking, provide assistance to victims and eliminate discrimination against women, as well as the development of entrepreneurship among women on an equal basis with men.

Please refer to the replies under paragraphs 10–11.

Paragraph 10

43. Within the framework of the OSCE plan on gender equality, optional and mandatory courses on the prevention of domestic violence are conducted in the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The curriculum provides for a course on the prevention of domestic violence which is offered every year for 125 third-year students of faculty No. 2 of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, divided into six study groups with 20 academic hours each, or 120 hours in total. The optional course on human trafficking involves the same number of hours for a similar number of students.

The Academy has now introduced a separate topic on the prevention of domestic violence consisting of 36 academic hours, upon completion of which students in the Academy take examinations.

44. A wide variety of courses, training events and round tables are organized on an ongoing basis for the staff of internal affairs bodies, local authorities and the information media. The Ministry of Internal Affairs conducts information and awareness-raising activities to inform the public and law enforcement personnel about the provisions of the law.

In order to implement the requirements of the law on parental responsibility for the education and upbringing of children, subdivisions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs organized more than 4,000 meetings, and educational and awareness-raising seminars, in secondary, vocational and higher education institutions, as well as television and radio features, in State enterprises, and in workplaces and *mahallahs*.

Under the national plan to combat human trafficking in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2016–2018, a joint plan was approved between nine ministries and departments of Tajikistan. Pursuant to the relevant paragraphs of the joint plan, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment regularly conducts information activities among migrant workers and students in technical high schools of the basic vocational training system on combating human trafficking. In 2017, 1,767 meetings and discussions were held, during which 235,565 people received information. Additionally, in the context of cooperation with international organizations, 21,000 guidelines and 22,064 pamphlets were issued and circulated to the public, 78 banners were produced and, in conjunction with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a training video on safe migration was produced and shown to the public on television channels.

45. Currently, the second phase of the State programme for human rights education (2015–2018), approved by Government decision of 3 December 2012, is being implemented. The programme covers human rights instruction (study) in the education system and training and refresher courses for teachers, judges, civil servants, law enforcement personnel and military personnel at all levels.

The curricula include separate items devoted to issues of ensuring women's rights, gender equality and non-discrimination against women.

46. In order to raise public awareness about the law on the prevention of domestic violence, the Human Rights Ombudsman has conducted various activities, including meetings and discussions with the public, participation in conferences, seminars and round tables, as well as talks on television and radio, publication of articles, and so forth.

The text of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the report of Tajikistan on the implementation of the Convention, the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the national plan of action to implement the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, have been posted on the website of the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Committee for Women and the Family. The Convention has been translated into the Tajik language and published in the compendium of basic international and nationa. 'nstruments in the field of human rights.

47. In 2017–2018, in order to raise the awareness of law enforcement personnel about all forms of violence against women and girls, staff of the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman conducted inspections of the work of internal affairs bodies No. 1 and 2 in the Firdavsi district, No. 2 in the Sino district of Dushanbe and the internal affairs body in the Dusti district of the Khatlon region, in relation to the prevention of domestic violence. During the inspections, discussions were held, and outreach work was carried out with inspectors and staff of the internal affairs bodies on the provisions of the law on the prevention of domestic violence.

48. Under the work strategy of the office of the Human Rights Ombudsman for the period 2016–2020, issues of equal rights of men and women, protection of women from violence and prevention of discrimination against women are being accorded priority. On the basis of reports by individuals and on their own initiative, staff participate in court proceedings concerning alimony, housing and other family issues. So far, there have been no written reports from women about violence or discrimination. Women often turn to the Human Rights Ombudsman to seek protection of their socioeconomic rights.

Issues associated with women's rights are addressed in the annual reports of the Human Rights Ombudsman.

49. Within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, an association of female staff of internal affairs bodies was established in 2007 and is in operation. The main objectives of the association are to increase the participation of female staff of the internal affairs bodies in facilitating the performance of operational and service tasks, to enhance the role and authority of female staff of internal affairs agencies in service collectives, and so forth.

50. The reform of the internal affairs bodies and their integration into the global system requires the broad involvement of women in law enforcement activities. This principle was incorporated in the police reform strategy approved by Presidential decree in 2013. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is conducting a continuous review of recruitment procedures and job descriptions from a gender perspective in order to identify possible elements of prejudice against women applicants and obstacles to their recruitment and, if necessary, make adjustments to these procedures.

51. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has implemented a joint project with the OSCE Office in Dushanbe on gender-sensitive law enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence and protection of victims. Under this project, posts of domestic violence inspectors have been added to the staffing table.

52. From March 2010 to the present, 14 posts of domestic violence inspectors, to be filled by women, have been added to the staffing table of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and 14 offices for the prevention of domestic violence have been opened within the framework of the project.

53. On 28 September 2011, the functional responsibilities of domestic violence inspectors were approved, and a special statistical reporting system was introduced for these types of offences; on 25 November 2013, methodological recommendations on compliance with and implementation of the law on the prevention of domestic violence by district police inspectors and domestic violence inspectors were approved; and on 20 April 2016, guidelines were adopted on the organization of the work of the staff of internal affairs bodies in preventing, eliminating and responding to cases of domestic violence.

54. District police inspectors are doing a great deal of work to prevent domestic violence. All district police inspectors are in close contact with domestic violence inspectors.

In 2013, the domestic violence inspectors reviewed 127 reports of domestic violence (district inspectors — 2,608); in 2014, 133 (district inspectors — 2,390); in 2015 — 203 (district inspectors — 2,264); and in 2016, 482 (district inspectors — 2,624). In 2017, the domestic violence inspectors reviewed 531 reports (district inspectors — 2,911) and during the first quarter of 2018, they reviewed 141 reports (district inspectors — 636).

55. Local executive bodies and medical institutions operate crisis and resource centres to provide legal and psychological support to women. In 2016, 621 vulnerable families were registered, in 2017 — 1,267, and during the first quarter of 2018, 544.

56. In 2017, 950 protocols were drawn up against offenders under articles 93(1) (Violation of the requirements of the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan on the prevention of domestic violence) and 93 (2) (Failure to comply with the requirements of a restraining order) of the Code of Administrative Offences and 185 protocols under other articles of the Code. A total of 911 restraining orders were issued against offenders. In the course of carrying out preventive measures, 1,113 disadvantaged families were placed under special registration. During this period, the domestic violence inspectors reviewed 531 reports, of which 402 concerned men and 129 concerned women.

During the first quarter of 2018, district police inspectors reviewed 636 reports, of which 529 concerned men and 107 concerned women. On the basis of these reports, 33 criminal cases were brought under various articles of the Criminal Code, 582 were dismissed, 7 are in process, and 14 were referred to the appropriate investigative jurisdiction.

During this period, 250 protocols were drawn up against offenders under articles 93 (1) and 93 (2) of the Code of Administrative Offences and 16 protocols under other articles of the Code. A total of 186 restraining orders were issued against offenders. In the course of carrying out preventive measures, 355 disadvantaged families were placed under special registration. During this period, the domestic violence inspectors reviewed 141 reports, of which 117 concerned men and 23 concerned women.

Please refer to the replies under paragraphs 9 and 11.

57. Court statistics show that for offences involving domestic violence, in 2014 the courts of Tajikistan convicted 23 people (all 23 of whom had engaged in violence against women), in 2015, 15 people (14 of whom had engaged in violence against women and one, against a child) in 2016, 70 people (62 of whom had engaged in

violence against women, 5 against a child and 3 against parents) and in 2017, 88 people (69 of whom had engaged in violence against women and 19 against a child).

In 2014 the courts convicted 14 people; in 2015, 6 people; and in 2017, 12 people for offences under article 130 (1) — human trafficking,

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

Paragraphs 11–12

58. At present, a State institution, the centre for the implementation of a project on access to green financing and financing for the development of rural localities, attached to the Ministry of Finance, is implementing a project on the commercialization of agriculture for a total of US$ 25 million. Of that amount, US$ 8 million is earmarked for a credit line. The Centre is also carrying out projects entitled "Programme on climate change adaptation and mitigation for the Aral Sea basin" for a total of US$ 9 million, of which US $ 7.72 million is earmarked for a credit line and "Access to green financing" for a total of US$ 10 million, US$ 8.8 million of which is a credit line and a component of the credit line for the project "Building climate change resilience in the Panj river basin" of US$ 2.8 million. A basic requirement of these projects is to ensure that at least 30 per cent of beneficiaries (recipients of credit) should be women.

In order to implement the government decision of 3 May 2010 approving the procedure for the allocation and disbursement of State benefits for children under the age of 16 who are HIV infected or suffering from AIDS, funds totalling seven times the basic indicator (350 somoni) are set aside in the State budget every month. A total of 2.1 million somoni was allocated for the payment of these benefits to 556 children in 2017, and 3.2 million somoni were provided for this purpose in 2018.

Under article 163 of the Health Code, the necessary funds are provided under the State budget for parents or legal representatives of children born to HIV-infected mothers to obtain breast-milk substitutes from birth to the time of establishment of a definitive diagnosis of the existence of HIV in order to further reduce the risk of transmission of HIV. In 2015, 20,400 somoni were allocated for this purpose, in 2016, 56,800 somoni, in 2017, 68,500 somoni and in 2018, 188,400 somoni.

These funds from the State budget contribute to efforts to combat human trafficking, provide assistance to victims and eliminate discrimination against women, as well as the development of entrepreneurship among women on an equal basis with men.

59. According to the statistics for the first quarter of 2018, there were 240 cases of offences against juveniles, including offences involving violations of the rights and freedoms of minors in the spheres of education and early marriage, relating to:

- Article 164 — Denial of access to compulsory (nine years) general education — 39 cases (2017 — 51);
- Article 168: Giving in marriage a girl who is under the marriageable age, 6 cases (2017 — 4);
- Article 169: Marrying a person who is under the marriageable age, 4 cases (2017 — 4).

60. During the period from 2016, 2017 and the first quarter of 2018, according to the records of the central information and analysis centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the following offences were detected and investigated:

Articles of the Criminal Code	*2016*	*2017*	*First quarter of 2018*
Article 130 (Abduction)	5	1	1
Article 130(1) (Human trafficking)	8	22	8
Article 130(2) (Use of slave labour)			
Article 131 (3) (para.3) (Illegal deprivation of liberty).			
Article 132 (Recruitment for the purpose of exploitation)	14	13	
Article 167 (Trafficking in minors)	7	11	3
Article 241(1) (Production and distribution of pornographic material or items with images of minors)	2		
Article 241(2) (Use of minors for the production of pornographic materials or items)			
Article 335(1) (Facilitating the illegal entry of foreign nationals or stateless persons into Tajikistan or illegal transit through the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan)	2	1	
Article 335(2) (Facilitating illegal migration)		3	2
Article 339 (3) (Theft of or damage to documents, stamps or seals).			
Article 340 (3) (Forgery, manufacture or sale of forged documents, State awards, stamps, seals or forms for the purpose of human trafficking).			
Total	**38**	**51**	**14**

Offences detected under article 130 (Abduction) of the Criminal Code:

Regions	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*
Dushanbe	3		
Centrally administered districts		1	
Khatlon region	1		1
Sogdh region	1		
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region			
Total	**5**	**1**	**1**

Offences detected under article 130 (1) (Human trafficking) of the Criminal Code:

Regions	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*
Dushanbe	4	15	8
Centrally administered districts	1		
Khatlon region			
Sogdh region	3	7	
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region			
Total	**8**	**22**	**8**
Aged 50 and over	1	2	1
Men:		3	

Offences detected under article 167 (Trafficking in minors):

Regions	*2016*	*2017*	*2018*
Dushanbe		3	
Centrally administered districts		2	
Khatlon region	3	5	3
Sogdh region	4	1	
Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region			
Total	**7**	**11**	**3**

61. Tajikistan is not a country of destination. Usually the traffickers, on the basis of fraudulent schemes, offer good jobs abroad and take women and girls abroad by deceitful means for the purpose of various forms of exploitation. Women and girls are being trafficked mainly to the United Arab Emirates, the Russian Federation and Turkey.

62. To address this problem, as early as 2005, by Government decree, an interdepartmental commission to combat human trafficking was established under the Government. The commission's tasks are to define the basic principles of government policy on combating human trafficking and to formulate recommendations with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the work of the agencies involved in combating this crime. It also reviews the level of criminality in respect of this type of offences, coordinates the activities of the regional commissions, participates in the formulation of the international agreements of the Republic of Tajikistan in the area of combating human trafficking and performs other functions in line with its statute.

Similar commissions have been set up in all the administrative regions of Tajikistan.

63. To this end, a law on combating human trafficking and providing assistance to victims was adopted in 2014. An additional action plan on human trafficking, aimed at providing assistance to victims of human trafficking, is being implemented.

64. In 2015–2016, in cooperation with IOM, draft laws to introduce amendments and additions to a number of legislative instruments were prepared, as well as drafts of a number of sectoral regulations for the implementation of the law on combating human trafficking and providing assistance to victims. These regulations supplement the law and also establish a list of offences involving human trafficking.

A new national plan to combat human trafficking for the period 2016–2018 was approved by Government decision on 27 July 2016. Under this plan:

- Guidelines for the establishment of support centres for victims of human trafficking were developed and approved;
- Model regulations for the centres for support and assistance to victims of human trafficking were adopted.

Also on 27 July 2016, a procedure for the implementation of a set of measures within the framework of the referral mechanism for victims of human trafficking was approved.

65. On 1 September 2016, with the support of the Embassy of the United States of America in Tajikistan, a centre for combating human trafficking was opened under the division to combat organized crime of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The

purpose of the establishment of the Centre is to improve coordination among entities combating human trafficking and formulate agreed measures in this regard.

Through this centre, the Ministry of Internal Affairs will strengthen its capacity by optimizing the joint efforts of the various structures and enhance the effectiveness of work with victims by building and strengthening its capacity to carry out activities in this area on the basis of universally recognized international standards.

66. In line with domestic legislation and international legal instruments, victims of human trafficking are accorded special attention and receive comprehensive psychological and other assistance with their return to normal life.

In accordance with a memorandum on cooperation between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and IOM, all victims of human trafficking who have been located by law enforcement agencies and who wish to receive assistance are sent to crisis centres at the IOM mission in Tajikistan.

Victims of human trafficking are provided with assistance and may choose to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in the prosecution of the offenders, in which case they receive legal aid in the form of a lawyer's services during the preliminary investigation and trial.

In 2013, five victims returned from the United Arab Emirates, in 2014, eight victims returned to Tajikistan, in 2015, 13 victims returned to Tajikistan, in 2016, five victims, in 2017, six victims (five victims from the United Arab Emirates, one victim from the city of Istanbul). Over the first two months of 2018, two victims returned to Tajikistan from the United Arab Emirates.

67. Women victims of human trafficking, if they wish, are able to take special training courses in various areas of specialization through referral to adult education centres attached to the employment agencies.

Child victims of human trafficking have to be enabled to continue their education and are given assistance for further studies in secondary specialized and higher education institutions.

68. With financial assistance from international human rights organizations, including the IOM office in Tajikistan and the branch of the American Bar Association in Tajikistan, seminars on combating human trafficking have been held, with the participation of staff from the public prosecutor's office, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and staff from consulates and diplomatic missions in other countries, as well as lawyers and judges. All these events were intended to improve the level of knowledge and professional skills of staff in the public prosecutor's office and internal affairs bodies, lawyers, consuls and staff working in the health care and education systems.

69. In accordance with the national plan of action on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2122 (2013), in order to align the provisions of the laws and regulations of Tajikistan and provide for the safeguards set out in the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has formulated a draft law providing for exemption from the penalty in article 499, part 3 of the Code of Administrative Offences: deportation from the Republic of Tajikistan.

Please refer to the replies under paragraphs 9–10.

Participation in political and public life

Paragraph 13

70. At present, Parliament is considering the question of establishing an alliance of women politicians, which would involve the participation of women politicians, representatives of ministries and departments, and also women activists, who would work on issues of gender policy. The main objective of the alliance would be the implementation and systematic monitoring of one of the most significant areas of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Education

Paragraphs 14–15

71. In the 2017–2018 academic year, 1,906,304 students are enrolled in general education institutions, including 914,498 girls, representing 47.97 per cent of the total number of students. Compared with the 2015–2016 academic year, the number of students in general education institutions in Tajikistan increased by 121,937, and the number of girls by 63,315 students (51.9 per cent).

72. Under the laws of Tajikistan, basic general education is compulsory. Broad measures are taken to enable all children to continue their studies at the third level of general education, in grades 10 and 11. In the 2016–2017 academic year, 154,248 students completed grade 9 (including 73,340 girls). A total of 124,671 students (including 58,263 girls), representing 79.4 per cent of the total number of girls who have completed grade 9, continued their studies at the third level. Many students continued their education in elementary and secondary vocational training institutions and short-term vocational courses.

In 2017, after completing general secondary education, 20,750 girls (out of a total of 49,470) continued their studies in higher education institutions, and 16,246 girls (out of a total of 25,434), in secondary vocational training institutions.

Every year, graduates from remote areas of Tajikistan enter higher education institutions under the Presidential quota. In 2017, 1,227 graduates (of whom 629, or 51.3 per cent, were girls) enrolled in higher education institutions.

The majority of girls entering vocational training institutions prefer occupations such as languages, banking, medicine, economics, law, applied mathematics, physics, chemistry, and teaching.

73. According to the reports for 2018, only 87 students (including 55 girls) are not enrolled in the education institutions of Tajikistan, for various reasons.

74. Currently, in 3,870 general education institutions, there are 120,635 teachers, 68,867 of whom are women (57.1 per cent) or 10,318 more (for women, 7,002 more) than in the 2015–2016 school year.

75. In the 2017–2018 academic year, 11,410 staff in general education institutions hold managerial positions (director, deputy director), 3,754 of whom are women, representing 32.9 per cent of the total. Compared with the 2015–2016 academic year, the number of women managers in general education institutions has increased by 99.

76. Women play an important role in the scientific life of Tajikistan. Of the 727 people holding doctorates in science, 93 are women: one in technology, 30 in medicine, 11 in economics, 2 in physics and mathematics, 4 in chemistry, and so forth. Of the 3,092 doctoral candidates, 698 are women: 17 in technology, 125 in economics, 53 in medicine, 35 in physics and mathematics, 57 in chemistry, and so forth.

77. Under the curriculum in all State elementary vocational training institutions and the adult education centre of Tajikistan, a State institution, special lessons and weekly educational sessions are conducted, covering issues of gender equality, domestic violence, discrimination against women, suicide among girls and women, prostitution and its consequences, human trafficking and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

The issue of prevention of discrimination against women is included in the curricula for managers, instructors and supervisors of practical training in vocational technical high schools and the Centre for refresher training and retraining of workers in the areas of labour, migration and employment, a State institution.

78. Certain categories of applicants (students who have completed secondary school with a gold medal, orphans, children with disabilities) are accorded special privileges on entry into education institutions in Tajikistan.

For girls, entry into secondary vocational training institutions (college) after grade 11 is subject to the same requirements applicable to boys; when their candidacies are considered, the same rules and conditions are taken into account for admission to the education institution. The only difference is that there are additional tests to assess physical fitness. The standards for girls are slightly modified.

After completing college, students can continue their education in a higher education institution. Graduates are accepted at the tertiary level in their area of specialization on the basis of entrance tests and competitive selection.

For those students who wish to gain specialized qualifications quickly and start work, there are short-term courses in narrow fields, such as courses for waiters, confectioners, cooks, tailors, programmers and so on, leading to a certificate of completion.

Currently, the enrolment of girls in secondary vocational training institutions represents 58 per cent of the total number of students.

The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, together with the Asian Development Bank, is implementing a project on strengthening vocational and technical education and training which includes an important component on gender equality — overcoming obstacles. The project includes activities aimed at enhancing the involvement of more than 2,230 girls in vocational and technical training and education.

79. In Tajikistan, significant attention is being devoted to the study of the exact sciences, especially mathematics and natural science, and information and communications technologies. To that end, open days are held every year at education institutions for graduates of general education schools of Tajikistan. Outreach activities and meetings are also held for graduates of general education schools in the districts and towns of Tajikistan, during which information is provided about the higher education institution, the learning environment, the academic staff, available areas of study and specialization, and so forth. Particular attention is paid to the training of girls, especially their access to higher vocational training.

Since 1997, selection has been made in higher education institutions on the basis of interviews under the Presidential quota for gifted youth, as well as for girls from mountainous and remote areas of the country, who account for 59 per cent of the total number selected.

Over the past five years, 7,657 applicants, including 3,933 girls, were accepted under the Presidential quota for higher vocational training institutions in various subjects and specialized fields, including technology, engineering, mathematics and computer science, natural science and technological studies. Since 2012, the number

of girls accepted under the Presidential quota for various areas of specialization increased from 607 to 629 in 2017. This can be illustrated as follows:

Year	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*Total*
Total	1,185	1,220	1,291	1,313	1,421	1,227	7,657
Of which, girls	607	628	679	679	711	629	3,933

The statistics on admission to the higher education institutions of Tajikistan show a clear trend of growth in the admission of girls to higher vocational training institutions. The introduction in 2014 of a centralized entrance examination for admission to secondary and higher vocational training institutions contributed to this trend. Entrance examinations have also become more accessible for girls.

For example, while in the 2012–2013 academic year, there were 38,738 school graduates entering higher education institutions, including 10,547 girls, the number entering higher vocational training institutions in the 2015–2016 academic year totalled 38,710, including 12,751 girls. In the 2017–2018 academic year, the figure was 49,470 school graduates, including 17,476 girls.

In the higher education institutions of Tajikistan, girls account for 35.3 per cent of the total number of students.

Employment

Paragraphs 16–17

80. Under article 140, part 2 of the Labour Code, wage discrimination is prohibited. The employer is obliged to pay workers the same wages for work of equal value. Changes to wage conditions which are detrimental to workers are not permitted. The State inspection service for labour, migration and employment conducts scheduled and unscheduled inspections of the payment of wages to employees of organizations and institutions.

No complaints have been received from individuals about wage discrimination, and no such cases have been detected by the staff of the State inspection service in the course of carrying out inspections.

81. Individual chapters of the Labour Code, adopted in 2016, set out regulations for the labour of domestic workers (chapter 21) and people working from home (chapter 22) Domestic workers are considered to be workers performing work (services) in the household for employers who are physical persons. The decision to hire or terminate the employment of domestic workers and information about their work are not entered in the work record by the employer. The employment of domestic workers is based on an employment contract, which also establishes the amount of compensation and its modalities.

Articles 248–251 of the Labour Code establish the regime of working and rest times for domestic workers, imposition and withdrawal of disciplinary penalties, settlement of individual labour disputes, and termination of an employment contract with a domestic worker.

Article 252 of the Labour Code defines the concept of working from home and provides for the conclusion of an employment contract. This type of work can be carried out if it is not harmful to the health of the worker and if security and safety requirements are met. The Labour Code establishes a number of conditions, which must be reflected in the employment contract, including on the use of equipment, raw materials, and so forth, belonging to either the worker or the employer, and the

procedure and time limits for providing them to the worker, the dispatch of finished products, and compensation and other payments to such workers. The regime for working and rest times, and security and safety requirements for people working from home, are defined in the employment contract.

82. Article 216 of the Labour Code prohibits the employment of women in heavy work. On 4 April 2017, by Government decree, a list of occupations was approved for which the employment of women is prohibited, as well as the maximum permissible loads for women who lift and move heavy objects by hand, so that the issue has been regulated at the legal level. The establishment by the State of certain restrictions on the employment of women is aimed at protecting the health of women from occupational hazards, and does not amount to discrimination in employment on the basis of gender.

The inclusion of amendments in article 216 of the Labour Code is currently considered premature.

Health

Paragraphs 18–19

83. In the context of the implementation of the plan of action on the sexual and reproductive health of mothers, newborns, children and adolescents for the period 2016–2020, and the national health strategy for the period 2010–2020, approved by a Government decision of 2 August 2010, and also in the context of global (Sustainable Development Goals — 2030, Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health — up to 2030) and national (National Development Strategy — 2030) strategies, and in order to achieve progress and ensure the sustainability of reproductive health and family planning programmes, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is undertaking a reform of the healthcare system. One of the strategic areas of reform is protection of the health of women, children, adolescents and young people.

Tajikistan has taken some steps in this regard for the sustainable development of the service for reproductive health and the health of mothers, children, adolescents and youth. Today, the mother and child service has been reorganized in line with evidence-based medicine and international standards, new cost-effective programmes are being introduced, national standards and protocols have been developed and are being implemented to ensure quality of care, and measures are being taken to integrate reproductive health services with primary health care and hygiene. For the first time, in the health care budget, resources have been allocated for the procurement of reproductive health items and contraceptives. As a result of this integrated approach, maternal mortality is decreasing (46.5 per 100,000 live births in 2008, and 28.3, in 2015), as well as infant mortality, and women have access to family planning services, which has helped reduce the undesirable number of abortions and increase the interval between births.

Recognizing the need to further improve family planning programmes and responding to the needs of the population, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in collaboration with key partners, including UNFPA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as well as other ministries such as the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Finance, has developed a plan for the implementation of the family planning programme.

The national action plan for family planning represents a comprehensive approach to the protection of reproductive health and family planning and includes the strategic goals and objectives of State policy in this area.

84. Standard operating procedures (SOPs) have been developed to provide a clear and detailed description of routine actions by healthcare providers who may render assistance/services to victims/survivors of gender-based violence. The SOPs set out clear procedures for stage-by-stage daily care, functions and responsibilities which must be followed by the staff of any healthcare facility. These may be medical facilities at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

85. One form of gender-based violence is sexual violence, which is on the rise. In order to organize and provide medical assistance to survivors of sexual violence, a working group of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare developed a clinical protocol for the organization and provision of medical assistance to victims of sexual violence, which is intended for healthcare supervisors, all medical workers who provide outpatient and polyclinic care (specially trained nurses and midwives, family doctors, family nurses, obstetricians and gynaecologists), as well as health workers who provide emergency, outpatient medical, specialized and advanced care at all levels, in accordance with their functions and capabilities. The protocol provides the doctor-practitioner with up-to-date recommendations on consultations, diagnosis, provision of the necessary medical assistance and psycho-emotional support, and alleviation of the consequences of sexual violence.

86. At the present time, medical services for women of child-bearing age throughout the country are provided by 5,217 midwives and 1,749 obstetrician-gynaecologists, including 2,311 midwives and 304 obstetrician-gynaecologists in rural and remote areas of the country.

87. In accordance with State guarantees under the law, children infected with HIV who are under the age of 16 are provided with a monthly social benefit (in cash). Children born to HIV-positive mothers are provided with free artificial nutrition (dry milk formula and so forth) until they reach the age of 18 months, in order to prevent the transmission of the infection from the mother.

88. The practical implementation of measures to combat the HIV epidemic is being organized under the national programme to combat the HIV epidemic in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2017–2020 (approved by a Government decision of 25 February 2017). In line with one of the main strategic areas (No. 1) of the 2017–2020 programme entitled "Prevention of HIV", measures are being taken to ensure quality HIV prevention services for key and vulnerable groups of the population, such as young people (including girls) and pregnant women.

All educational and other activities on issues related to HIV prevention are conducted in Tajikistan in different venues, including State institutions, public associations and education institutions, within the framework of the implementation of the programme for the period 2017–2020; the special issues addressed include combating stigma and discrimination associated with HIV.

Mass events and other activities, which include issues related to combating stigma and discrimination, are held annually in all regions of Tajikistan on such dates as Zero Discrimination Day, the World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims and World AIDS Day, in March, May and December respectively.

HIV prevention among pregnant women under the programme for the period 2017–2020 includes measures to prevent the transmission of HIV from mother to child (programme for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission). Since 2011, there has been universal screening for HIV infection among pregnant women using the "opt out" strategy (HIV testing offered and carried out for all pregnant women). Every year, more than 90 per cent of pregnant women are tested for HIV.

In 2017, in the context of the measures carried out on the basis of the programme for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV for the period 2017–2020

and the report of Tajikistan as part of global monitoring of the AIDS epidemic, 139 HIV-positive pregnant women were registered with the reproductive health centres and kept under observation by specialists, and gave birth during that year.

Of the 139 HIV-positive pregnant women, 57 of them had an HIV infection diagnosed during the current pregnancy (in 2017), and 82 women had been diagnosed with HIV earlier (in previous years). Of these women, 137 (98.6 per cent) received (are receiving) antiretroviral therapy for life. A total of 96 infants born to HIV-positive mothers in 2017 were tested for HIV for up to two months after birth, and in all cases the result was negative.

According to the preliminary results of the mother-to-child transmission programme implemented in Tajikistan, the risk of mother-to-child HIV transmission among HIV-positive pregnant women who are kept under observation by specialists at reproductive health centres and are receiving antiretroviral therapy for life is now in practice less than 1 per cent.

Rural women

Paragraph 20

89. According to the Pensions Act of Tajikistan, of 25 June 1993, women working as tractor drivers, drivers of construction and road vehicles and loading and unloading equipment carried on tractors and excavators, upon reaching 50 years of age, and with a total of at least 15 years' service; women working in dairies (operators of milking machines), upon reaching 50 years of age and with at least 20 years' service, provided that the service norms have been met; women working for the full season of cotton cultivation and harvesting or tobacco cultivation, harvesting and post-harvest processing, upon reaching 50 years of age and with at least 20 years' service; doctors and other medical personnel directly involved in treatment and prevention among the population after having worked in their area of specialization for at least 25 years in rural areas and villages and at least 30 years in towns; are entitled to pensions on preferential terms — men at 55 years of age and women at 50 years of age.

90. In order to ensure access to justice for the rural population, including women, mobile court sessions have been held by the courts, 10,438 in 2014; 11,558 in 2015; 12,976 in 2016; and 15,188 in 2017. Meetings and discussions on various legal topics have also been organized: 8,151 in 2014; 9,953 in 2015; 7,137 in 2016 and 9,090 in 2017. Furthermore, television and radio broadcasts have been organized, with the participation of judges: 1,863 in 2014; 1,845 in 2015; 1,586 in 2016 and 2,196 in 2017.

91. In accordance with the national plan and the plan of action of the State programme for the prevention of domestic violence in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2011–2023, in which individual chapters and a series of measures are devoted to overcoming stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes towards women, broad outreach is being conducted among the population. At the local level, State bodies carry out awareness-raising and information campaigns among the population, with the involvement of public organizations, chairs of *mahallah* councils, women activists and religious leaders, on the responsibilities of men in the family, equality of rights between men and women, and the responsibilities of parents in the upbringing of children.

92. An important indicator of effective gender policy is the level of women's access to economic and financial resources. Gender equality issues have been incorporated as a cross-cutting theme in the national development strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030, as well as the principles of equal rights of men and women in access to land at the level of legislation and policy.

93. In order to reduce female unemployment, the State programme for the training of women specialists and promotion of their employment for the period 2012–2015 includes measures designed to stimulate the employment of women. One of the effective policy directions in respect of women's employment is support for women's initiatives in self-employment and entrepreneurship through the granting of microcredit, which is an effective instrument of the poverty reduction strategy.

94. At the beginning of 2018, the number of pensioners registered with the Social Insurance and Pensions Agency was 665,078, including 276,147 women living in rural areas.

In accordance with the law on contributory and State pensions, all persons, regardless of gender, who are insured under the compulsory pension insurance system, are entitled to receive a pension.

There is no separate law on social security for women, since women have the same rights as men.

A State pension is granted to provide social and material support to citizens who are not entitled to receive a pension under the insurance system.

95. Every two years, the Statistics Agency produces a statistical compendium entitled "Women and men". The compendium provides information on the situation of women and men in all sectors of the economy and the social sphere compared with previous years. The latest edition of the compendium was issued in 2016.

96. From 8 August to 11 November 2017, the Statistics Agency conducted the 2017 Tajikistan demographic and health survey. The survey was conducted with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Additional funding for the survey was provided by UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Tajikistan. The main objective of the survey is to provide updated data on key health and demographic indicators of fertility, the use of contraception, maternal and child health and nutrition, child mortality, incidence of domestic violence against women, children's upbringing, awareness and behaviour in respect of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, as well as other issues linked to smoking and high blood pressure.

The main survey respondents were women of reproductive age, 15 to 49 years of age.

Every year a statistical compendium entitled "Gender indicators on *dehkan* farms" is issued; it provides information on the situation of women and men in agriculture, especially on *dehkan* farms, compared with previous years. The latest edition of the compendium was issued in 2016.

97. Gender indicators on the production activities of *dehkan* farms are among the basic indicators that reflect the core principles of equality between men and women and equal opportunities for men and women in the agricultural sector. The Statistics Agency revised six statistical forms for agricultural statistics pursuant to protocol decision No. 2 of the meeting of the Coordination Council on the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) project on land reform and women's rights to land and other economic resources (para. 4) concerning gender indicators for agriculture reports on the progress of land reform, as well as the role and situation of rural women in agriculture.

As of 1 January 2017 there were 145,107 working farms. In 2016 there were 31,041 *dehkan* farms headed by women, or 21.4 per cent of the total number of *dehkan* farms. The number of *dehkan* farms is increasing every year. Since 2011, the number has increased by a factor of 2.5.

In the context of the reforms carried out, the Government has established a solid legal framework for enhancing the status of women in society and ensuring equal rights and opportunities both for men and for women, which has had a significant impact on strengthening women's rights and their access to means of production, especially land. As a result of the reforms carried out, in the agricultural sector many *dehkan* farms have been transformed into smaller individual and family *dehkan* farms. This process has therefore contributed to raising the level of women's entrepreneurship and, in particular, to an increase in the number of *dehkan* farms managed by women.

Of the 8.7 million people in Tajikistan (before 1 January 2017 — 8,742,800 people) half (49.3 per cent) are women, and every year the number of women increases. In 2010, the total number of women in managerial positions in enterprises and organizations was 9,469. In 2016, this figure rose to 17,556, an increase by a factor of 1.9. The indicators for the past six years have increased in *dehkan* farms and entrepreneurial activities as shown by the number of patents or permits. In 2010–2016, the number of heads of *dehkan* farms compared with 2010 increased by a factor of 5.7 (5,450 in 2010 and 31,041 in 2016).

98. In 2017 the Statistics Agency issued an analytical report entitled "Employment situation in the labour market of the Republic of Tajikistan", prepared on the basis of the findings of the workforce survey conducted from 20 July to 20 August 2016. The survey was carried out with financial support from the World Bank under the Statistics Agency project "National strategy for the development of statistics of the Republic of Tajikistan" and is the third workforce survey conducted by the statistical bodies. The main purpose of the survey was to obtain statistics in order to evaluate:

- The number of persons who are working, including the size of the workforce and the number of persons outside the workforce;
- Determination of the total number of unemployed persons and assessment of the level of total unemployment in Tajikistan;
- Determination of the amount of employment in the informal sector and assessment of total informal employment;
- Measurement of external labour migration and identification of destinations;
- Measurement of internal circular migration;
- Measurement of the employment of children and adolescents aged 12 to 17 years;
- Measurement of unpaid work of trainees or persons undergoing vocational and technical training;
- Identification of work by volunteers;
- Measurement of work to produce goods and services for personal use;
- Characteristics of the labour market from a gender perspective.

In the 2016 survey, special attention was devoted to the information needed for determining gender aspects of labour and employment, and also unemployment among women.

99. The female population of working age (15–75 years) represents more than half the population of Tajikistan. The workforce participation rate of women is 32.6 per cent. The size of this indicator suggests that women may be more disadvantaged than men in terms of use of their potential for the workforce. The employment rate is also significantly higher among men than among women (59.5 per cent and 40.5 per cent respectively). However, according to the data in the 2016 survey showing the level of

unemployment and other aspects of underutilization of the labour force, women were in a much better situation than men. At the same time, in absolute terms, the number of women outside the workforce was significantly higher than that of men — 1,806,249 women compared to 1,125,857 men. With regard to the occupational structure of employment, there was a marked gender segregation. Women were concentrated in a narrow range of occupations, and this was confirmed by the occupational segregation index, which was 0.62 per cent in favour of men.

Disadvantaged groups of women

Paragraph 21

100. In recent years, the Government has paid special attention to migrants' families, abandoned wives of migrant workers and female-headed households. As far back as 2009, a study was carried out entitled "Abandoned wives of Tajik migrant workers". According to estimates by UN-Women, the average age of women left behind by migrant husbands ranges from 24 to 60 years. Abandoned wives live primarily in rural localities.

The major challenges facing abandoned families include the following: lack of money for daily healthy nutrition of family members, lack of employment, land, and home ownership, issues related to children (school and higher education, employment, marriage), lack of access to legal aid, legal services, etc. At the same time, women believe that with their level of education and work experience, they are unable to run small businesses, are afraid to take loans from banks and fear that they would not be able to use such loans in an informed manner.

Taking into account the current situation, the relevant State structures, together with international organizations and non-governmental organizations, are working in close cooperation in this regard. In particular, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, together with the Save the Children organization, has implemented a project on reducing the adverse economic and social consequences of labour migration by improving the protection of migrants' families and children who remain in Tajikistan. As a result of the research on this project, the social problems of 270 families of migrant workers were resolved, 872 citizens were given legal advice, 19 children were placed in boarding schools, 178 families consisting of women and children were referred to appropriate structures for the provision of free psychological assistance, 127 children from vulnerable families of migrant workers were admitted to remedial education centres free of charge, and 143 children were given an exemption from all school fees and other additional costs.

In addition, an IOM project on the empowerment of migrant workers' families left behind in Tajikistan was conducted jointly with UN-Women for inhabitants of the Rasht and Kulyab region.

101. Counselling and training centres for migrant workers are in operation in all regions of Tajikistan, and are providing a range of free services to migrant workers. In addition, departments have been established within the migration service for reception and counselling of migrant workers and a telephone hotline is in operation.

102. In recent years, measures have been taken for the reintegration of migrant workers who have returned home. Under a programme for employment of migrant workers returning home which has been approved, in 2016 alone, 7,762 migrant workers were placed in employment within Tajikistan.

103. The draft law on labour migration, which is currently being prepared, includes separate provisions on the mechanism for identifying children left behind by migrant workers and ensuring their rights to social support, education and healthcare.

104. In the context of cooperation with the UNICEF office in Tajikistan, beginning in June 2018, a project on protecting children affected by migration will be implemented in six towns and districts of Tajikistan for a period of three years. The project is funded by the European Union and aims to protect the rights of children suffering the adverse effects of migration and assist their families living in difficult conditions. For the purpose of implementation of the project, a coordination committee has been established composed of representatives of the relevant ministries and departments, as well as international organizations.

Paragraph 22

105. On 26 July 2000, with a view to protecting security and public order in populated areas and maintaining the secrecy of strategically important sites, in accordance with the Refugees Act, the Government adopted a decision on the establishment of a list of populated areas of the Republic of Tajikistan in which the temporary residence of asylum-seekers and refugees is not permitted. Asylum-seekers and refugees who settle in the territory of Tajikistan must respect the list. Local authorities and self-governing bodies of populated areas that were not included in this list are making great efforts to ensure that asylum-seekers and refugees settle in places where there is sufficient infrastructure. At the same time, asylum-seekers and refugees are able to receive education and to work, to be employed, and to engage in entrepreneurial activities in other populated areas. In view of the risk of terrorist and extremist crimes, the spread of infectious diseases and other threats, refugees are not permitted to live in certain towns and districts, as most of the refugees arrive in Tajikistan from Afghanistan, where the situation remains unstable. In order to improve work with asylum-seekers and refugees, the Government adopted a decision of 2 August 2004 which excluded a number of districts from the list of populated areas.

Refugees, including women and children, are guaranteed access to medical care, job placement, employment and entrepreneurial activity and the enjoyment of other rights, including the right to receive primary and secondary education. Local authorities do everything possible to place refugees in areas with adequate infrastructure.

Marriage and family relations

Paragraph 23

106. In accordance with article 33 of the Constitution, everyone has the right to found a family, and men and women of marriageable age have the right to enter freely into marriage. Only marriages concluded in state civil registration bodies are recognized. A marriage concluded in a religious ceremony does not have legal force. Marriages which took place in religious ceremonies in the territory of Tajikistan before 19 December 1929 are deemed to be official marriages.

107. State bodies regularly conduct awareness-raising work among the general public, in particular with families who are not in officially registered marriages and have children.

108. According to statistics, in 2017, the civil registration bodies registered 35,496 paternity claims. In the first quarter of 2018, the number was 9,267.

Please refer to the replies under paragraphs 6–8.